

THE NEW PLAYS

"The Gentile Wife"
A Nervous Creation
BY CHARLES DARNTON

WITH her amber hair piled high on her head, Emily Stevens is the irritating force of "The Gentile Wife," the play by Rita Weillman at the Vanderbilt Theatre.

I don't mean to say that Miss Stevens rises above the play because of her hair, for she never succeeds in being anything more than neurotic. The play presents an interesting



problem without solving it. A Jew may marry a Gentile and live unhappily ever after, if that happens to be the case.

Frankly, this matrimonial situation doesn't interest me. Racial instinct has nothing in common with drama. If the writer of the play fails to give it dramatic situations. In my opinion, the man or woman who goes to the theatre is not vitally concerned with the question of race. First of all, there must be a play of universal appeal.

"The Gentile Wife" is a nervous creation, and this fact is proved in the scene where the wife of David hanks her way into the garden at night with a man who draws her there by quiet physical force. He merely gives her the word that he feels she will obey, and when the moment has

passed she has nothing to say for herself. In this respect Miss Weillman strikes a true and daring note in play writing. Only a woman, perhaps, would dare to deal frankly with physical attraction. In any event, this incident stands out as a stark challenge to human nature. It is a slice of life for which no apology is made.

The moon may have been shining, the nightingale singing, but the fact remains that the wife follows her husband's friend out of the house, and afterward makes no bones about the skeleton that a less courageous woman might have kept in her closet. With no love for the man who fascinates her, the wife makes a fool of herself overnight.

There is real drama, as well as truth, in the play of Miss Weillman's. All the potter about Jew and Gentile doesn't matter, nor is it likely to interest people who go to the theatre for the good or the bad they may get out of it. Miss Weillman has taken the bull by the horns, and, at the same time, written with facility and understanding. Moreover, her racial point of view is clear up to a certain point. It is surprising to say the least, that the heroine discovers, when she meets the relatives of her husband, that she has married a Jew. Surely, she might have guessed as much in her earlier acquaintance with David, though I must say that David Powell, who plays the husband with a fine sense of devotion, suggests an Englishman in every line of his face and every tone of his voice. He is an excellent actor—one of the few sensitive actors on our stage for that matter—who happens to find himself miscast, and for this reason, perhaps, he seems to clutch at the tone and manners of John Barrymore in "Redemption."

Miss Stevens makes the wife a creature of nerves, yet she is theatrically effective. Vera Gordon is true to type and amusing as the Jewish mother; Mrs. A. Asheroff gives dignity and racial significance to David's old aunt. Frank Conway as the scientific lover with intelligent restraint, and Eleanor Montell is clever, though a bit "mannered" as the girl who contributes small talk to the first act.

One of the settings by Robert Edmond Jones has the semblance of a mortuary, and is quite enough in itself to kill the play. A pair of "Papa Davis" has established in it may serve as an excuse for the sepulchral arrangement, but a ticket box from the subway would be quite as ornamental and equally useful. A "breakfast porch" is another scenic effect calculated to harden a soft-boiled egg.

"The Voice of McConnell" Is Heard.

SURE, and 'twas a GREEN Christmas after all.

There wasn't the least doubt about it in the audience that filled the Manhattan Opera House last night to see the opening of Chauncey Olcott in "The Voice of McConnell." Even at the door green flags were offered for sale. And, of course, Mr. Olcott wore a green tie and sang some of the old songs which have kept him green for years in the memories of thousands and will keep his memory green for years to come.

But there were new songs, too—also green. These included "Ireland, My Land of Dreams," "You Can't Deny You're Irish" and "When I Look in Your Eyes, Maureen." All are useful and catchy, especially the last named, which was whistled by scores as they left the theatre.

"The Voice of McConnell" is the story of a Dublin choir singer who is brought to this country and wins instant fame and fortune. There is an adventure who steals a \$26,000 ring at a party to which McConnell has been invited to sing. He learns the identity of the adventures, and to save an embarrassing situation for his hostess and prevent scandal he writes his check for the cost of the ring

and gives it to the man from whom it was stolen, telling the hostess that he had taken the ring himself as a joke. Then he has a duplicate ring made which he presents to the daughter of the hostess after an engagement negotiated by telephone. The adventures and the man from whom she stole the ring meanwhile decide to be married and she gets McConnell's check back and returns it to him, so everything ends happily, with no one the loser and the two girls wearing the duplicate rings on their third fingers.

Both the play and the songs were written by George M. Cohan, under whose personal supervision the comedy was staged. Mr. Olcott and his singing feature the whole performance. Constance Beaumar, as the adventures, and Roy Cochrane, as McConnell's wife, were well received. Others in the cast are Mrs. Alice Chapin, as the hostess; Gilda Feary, as the hostess's daughter; Edward Felling, as the manager of McConnell; Richard Taber and Harold Becker, who fell in love with the adventures after she had stolen the ring from him.

Mr. Olcott, after the second act, answered to repeated calls with a little talk in which he gave credit for the production to Mr. Cohan. After which there was presented to him a harp about six feet high, made out of flowers twined with ribbons—GREEN ribbons.

About Plays and Players
By BIDE DUDLEY

BROADWAY hears that A. H. Woods is planning a trip abroad early in January. His comedy hit, "Friendly Enemies," is to be produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, late next month and he wants to be on hand. Aaron Hoffman, co-author of the play with Samuel Shipman, has returned from California and is adapting the comedy for English consumption. He will sail with Mr. Woods.

ANOTHER RECORD SET.
The Hippodrome broke all its Christmas attendance records yesterday. More than 11,000 people saw Charles Dillingham's "Everything."

GRATEFUL CHORUS MEN.
The men of the chorus at the Park Theatre yesterday presented General Manager William Wade Hinshaw and his wife, Mabel Clyde Hinshaw, of the Society of American Singers, with a handsome loving cup "in recognition of the real spirit of Americanism in this company, which treats the chorus men as men and artists."

BUSINESS FINE.
Business was excellent in the theatre all over town yesterday afternoon and last night. The Moers. Shubert report capacity crowds at all their twenty-five houses.

GOSSIP.
Only 364 more days till Christmas. Do your shopping early.
Capt. Frank Tinney and his "Attie."

A THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY.
As his Christmas gift, Mrs. Dodie Penny of Wellsville made her husband two nice nightgowns out of flour sacks she'd been saving.

FOOLISHMENT.
A dancing young woman named Lou, who had just had with the "It," when old Doctor Blumby, the doctor, came quite a hollusion.

FROM THE CHESTNUT TREE.
"Any music in this picture theatre?"
"No. Nothing but piano."

LITTLE MARY MIXUP



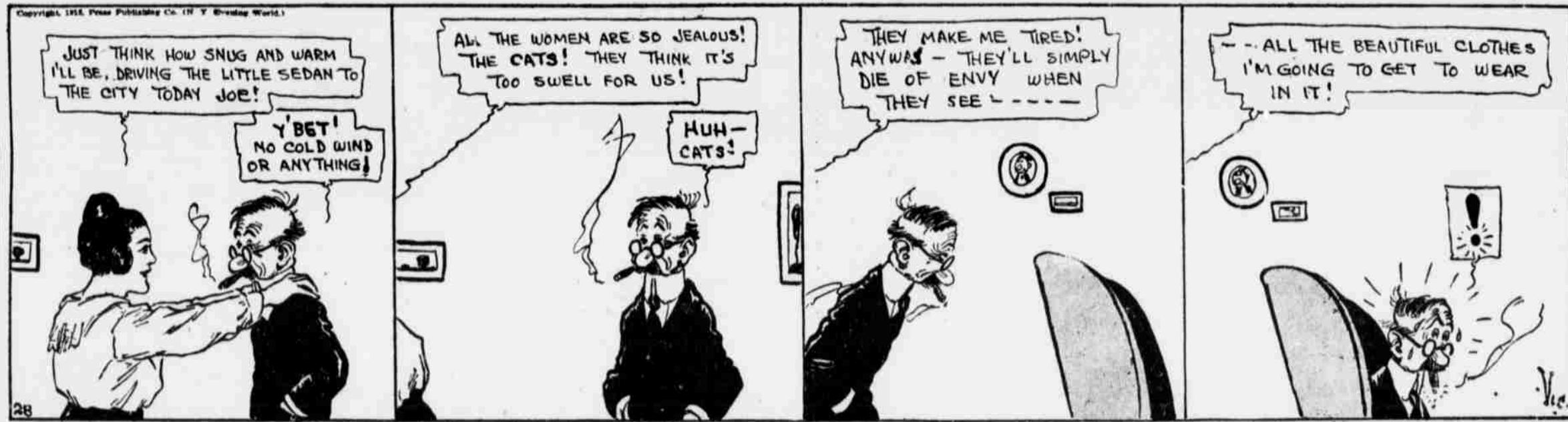
This Would Be a Horse on the Livery Stable Man!

THE BIG LITTLE FAMILY



We Only Hope Her Opinion Is Fair and Unbiased!

JOE'S CAR



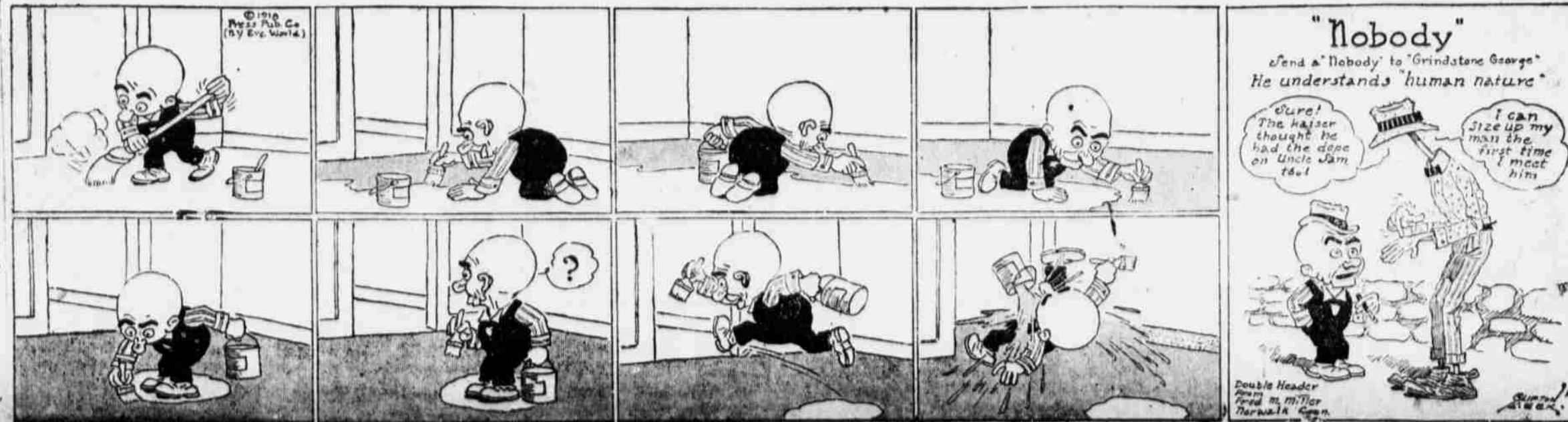
Joe May Die Too, But Not From "Envy!"

"SOMEWHERE IN NEW YORK"



The Day After Christmas

GRINDSTONE GEORGE



He Painted Himself In, Then Painted Himself Out!

"Nobody"

Send a "Nobody" to "Grindstone George" He understands human nature.

